Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A solid detergent composition comprising:

(a) an effective amount of a cleaning agent to provide soil removal, wherein the cleaning agent comprises at least one of:

(i) surfactant;

(ii) source of alkalinity;

(iii) water conditioning agent; ~~and~~ or

(iv) enzyme;

(b) an effective amount of a binding agent dispersed throughout the solid detergent composition to provide the detergent composition as a solid at room temperature, the binding agent comprising a result of mixing:

(i) about 10 wt.% to about 80 wt.% alkali metal carbonate;

(ii) about 1 wt.% to about 40 wt.% alkali metal bicarbonate; and

(iii) a sufficient amount of water to react with the alkali metal carbonate and the alkali metal bicarbonate;

wherein the solid detergent composition is provided as an extruded or cast solid as a result of a step of hardening.

2. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the binding agent comprises alkali metal sesquicarbonate.

3. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said alkali metal bicarbonate is provided as a reaction product of alkali metal carbonate and acid.

4. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises a builder comprising sodium tripolyphosphate, sodium nitrilotriacetate, or mixtures thereof.

5. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises a builder comprising sodium tripolyphosphate, organic phosphate, amino carboxylate, or mixtures thereof.

6. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the cleaning agent comprises a surfactant comprising at least one of a nonionic surfactant, an anionic surfactant, and a mixture thereof.

7. (CANCELED)

8. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the cleaning agent comprises alkali metal carbonate monohydrate and anhydrous alkali metal carbonate.

9. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprises a blend of two or more organophosphonate compounds, a blend of two or more aminoacetate compounds, or a blend of at least one organophosphonate compound and at least one aminoacetate compound.

10. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the composition is in the form of a pellet.

11. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the solid composition is in the form of a block.

12. (CANCELED)

13. (ORIGINAL) A solid detergent composition according to claim 1, wherein the solid composition is in the form of a cast solid.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for solidifying a detergent composition, the method comprising:

(a) mixing an effective amount of a cleaning agent to provide soil removal and an effective amount of a binding agent to solidify the detergent composition to form a mixture, the cleaning agent comprising at least one of:

(i) surfactant;

(ii) source of alkalinity;

(iii) water conditioning agent; ~~and~~ or

(iv) enzyme;

the binding agent comprising a result of mixing:

(i) about 10 wt.% to about 80 wt.% alkali metal carbonate;

(ii) about 1 wt.% to about 40 wt.% alkali metal bicarbonate; and

(iii) a sufficient amount of water to react with the alkali metal carbonate and the alkali metal bicarbonate;

(b) casting or extruding the mixture; and

(c) hardening the mixture to form the solid detergent composition.

15. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 14, further comprising a step of:

(a) generating alkali metal bicarbonate by reacting alkali metal carbonate with acid.

16. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 15, wherein the acid comprises at least one of citric acid, sulfamic acid, adipic acid, succinic acid, and mixtures thereof.

17. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 14, wherein the binding agent comprises alkali metal sesquicarbonate.

18. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 14, wherein the step of mixing comprises extruding the composition in an extruder.

19. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 14, further comprising a step of:

(a) solidifying the mixture of cleaning agent and binding agent.

20. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 14, further comprising a step of:

(a) packaging the mixture of cleaning agent and binding agent.

21. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 14, wherein the composition comprises a blend of two or more organophosphonate compounds, a blend of two or more aminoacetate compounds, or a blend of at least one organophosphonate compound and at least one aminoacetate compound.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method according to claim 14, wherein the step of casting or extruding the mixture comprises extruding the mixture into a pellet.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method according to claim 14, wherein the step of casting or extruding the mixture comprises extruding the mixture into a block.

24. (CANCELED)

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method according to claim 14, wherein the step of casting or extruding the mixture comprises casting the mixture into a cast solid.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A solid detergent composition comprising:

(a) an effective amount of a cleaning agent to provide soil removal, wherein the cleaning agent comprises at least one of:

(i) surfactant;

(ii) source of alkalinity;

(iii) water conditioning agent; ~~and~~ or

(iv) enzyme;

(b) an effective amount of a binding agent dispersed throughout the solid detergent composition to provide the detergent composition as a solid at room temperature, the binding agent comprising a result of mixing:

(i) about 10 wt.% to about 80 wt.% alkali metal carbonate;

(ii) about 1 wt.% to about 40 wt.% alkali metal bicarbonate;

(iii) alkali metal sesquicarbonate; and

(iv) a sufficient amount of water to react with the alkali metal carbonate and the alkali metal bicarbonate;

wherein the solid detergent composition is provided as an extruded or cast solid as a result of a step of hardening.

27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for solidifying a detergent composition, the method comprising:

(a) mixing an effective amount of a cleaning agent to provide soil removal and an effective amount of a binding agent to solidify the detergent composition, the cleaning agent comprising at least one of:

(i) surfactant;

(ii) source of alkalinity;

(iii) water conditioning agent; ~~and~~ or

(iv) enzyme;

the binding agent comprising a result of mixing:

(i) about 10 wt.% to about 80 wt.% alkali metal carbonate;

(ii) about 1 wt.% to about 40 wt.% alkali metal bicarbonate;

(iii) alkali metal sesquicarbonate; and

(iv) a sufficient amount of water to react with the alkali metal carbonate and the alkali metal bicarbonate;

(b) casting or extruding the mixture; and

(c) hardening the mixture to form the solid detergent composition.